**DAP use of PAS and PKR symbols a game changer?**
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**By Lim Kit Siang**

COMMENT April 18, 2013 had been the most heart-rending day in my life, the day when the Registrar of Societies (ROS) dispatched a letter to the DAP to knock out the Rocket symbol from the 13th general election (GE), with nomination day less than 48 hours away, completely without any legal basis or plausible ground.

I was not the only one to shed tears yesterday as all over the country, many DAP stalwarts and supporters who are Malaysian patriots whose home and sole object of loyalty is Malaysia and do not know or recognise another country as their motherland, also cried at the injustice, oppression and iniquity of the ROS action , clearly at the behest of the political masters in Umno/Barisan Nasional.

For 47 years, DAP had waged a patriotic, nationalistic but uphill battle to build a united, multiracial, just and democratic Malaysian nation with many leaders like Dr Chen Man Hin, Ahmad Nor, P Patto, Ibrahim Singgeh, Fadzlan Yahya, Peter Dason, Lau Dak Kee, Lim Cho Hock, V David, Karpal Singh, Chian Heng Kai, Chan Kok Kit, Dr Tan Seng Giaw, Lim Guan Eng, Tan Kok Wai, Teresa Kok, paying a heavy personal price in their love, patriotism and loyalty to Malaysia, including losing their personal liberties enduring detention under the Internal Security Act, imprisonment and disqualification as MP and disenfranchisement of their civil rights such as the right to vote and to stand for elections for a period of time.

DAP leaders and supporters have a different vision for Malaysia from those of the Umno/Barisan Nasional leaders, (and the greatest difference is whether Malaysia should continue to practise the exclusive politics of race or should begin an inclusive politics for all Malaysians regardless of race, religion or region) but their love, loyalty and patriotism for Malaysia cannot be questioned, and it is a great test of the maturity of Malaysian nation-building and democracy whether there is room and space in the country's political process for dissent and diversity of views without equating them with disloyalty, anti-national activities or even treason.

The ROS action, on the directive of the political masters in Putrajaya, to knock out the Rocket symbol from GE13 is the most dastardly, oppressive, undemocratic and dishonourable acts of the 56-year Umno/Barisan Nasional rule, an act no Malay gentleman-political leaders like Onn Jaffar, Hussein Onn, Tunku Abdul Rahman, Dr Ismail Abdul Rahman, Abdul Razak Hussein would would have countenanced or be a party to as it runs against the very grain of civility and being a gentleman or Jun Zhi.

In fact, never before under the five previous prime ministers of Tunku Abdul Rahman, Abdul Razak, Hussein, even Mahathir Mohamad and Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, had any more devious and diabolical plot been hatched in utter disregard of the most rudimentary rules and principles of good and democratic governance than the disgraceful ROS gambit to knock out a long-established political party from freely and democratically participating in the general elections of the country by outlawing its symbol, the Rocket logo.

Clearly the ROS action is meant to be a blow to the solar plexus to completely knock out the DAP in GE13, a plot which had been hatched and refined by the ROS' political masters in the past few months - explaining the rumours on the MCA/Umno grapevine since the beginning of the year that the DAP would not be allowed to use the Rocket symbol in GE13!

Crocodile tears

Now, we have the MCA president shedding crocodile tears, asking that the DAP should be allowed to use the Rocket symbol in GE13. I will not be surprised if the MCA leadership is the main culprit behind the ROS decision, appealing for help from the Umno "Big Brother" to give a fatal blow to DAP, in the same way that the MCA leadership had surrendered Gelang Patah seat to UMNO so that Johor Mentri Besar Ghani Othman could be fielded to "kill" me in Gelang Patah.

In today's press, there is a cacophony of contradictory reports quoting different government officials emitting different noises, from the DAP cannot use the Rocket symbol to the DAP can use the Rocket symbol.

One of the saddest legacies of 56 years of Umno/BN rule is that independent, neutral and professional institutions and government officers have lost public credibility, trust and confidence - as in the ROS letter two days before nomination day declaring that the government does not recognise the DAP's central executive committee (CEC) four months after their election.

Not recognising the DAP CEC can only mean "not recognising" the DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng and the collateral consequence of "not recognising" his authorisation of the use of Rocket symbol by the 53 parliamentary and 103 state assembly candidates.

The long decades of undemocratic, draconian and authoritarian Umno/BN rule have destroyed the efficiency, independence and professionalism of one of the best civil

services in the world when the country achieved independence 56 years ago in 1957, resulting in the monstrous action by the ROS letter to the DAP yesterday!

The refusal of the ROS to recognise the DAP CEC and consequent disallowance of the use of Rocket in the GE13 is the new and latest reason why there must be a change of government on May 5, so that a start could be made to restore the reputation, credibility and integrity of the Malaysian civil service as among the top best civil services in the world.

I thank the PKR and PAS leaders, in particular Anwar Ibrahim, Tok Guru Nik Aziz Nik Mat, Abdul Hadi Awang, PAS secretary-genral Mustafa Ali and PKR secrtary-general Saifuddin Nasution for their understanding, support and comradeship in coming to the assistance of DAP in our crisis because of the RoS action at the behest of the Umno/BN leadership.

Pakatan Rakyat leaders had sought to register the Pakatan Rakyat as a political coalition under the Societies Act but for more than three years we encountered seemingly insuperable obstacles, all emanating from the political masters in Putrajaya, refusing to register Pakatan Rakyat so that Pakatan candidates of all the three political parties, DAP, PAS and PKR can use a common symbol.

Now the Societies Act and the Registrar of Societies have been suborned and undermined to serve the political interests of the powers-that-be in Umno/BN.

I fully agree with Anwar that the ROS action is part of the "dirty tricks" lined up by Umno/BN to cheat in GE13 by making it impossible for the DAP to use the Rocket logo in the coming general election.

Rocket symbol has stood tall

DAP leaders, candidates, members and supporters are not going to be deterred or demoralised to fight the great and good fight to achieve for the first time a political change at the federal level in GE13, even if we have to temporarily forgo the Rocket logo and to use the logos of PKR and PAS.

In fact, we are even more determined to translate our shock and sorrow into strength and power for change.

The Rocket symbol had stood tall in Malaysian politics in the past 47 years, standing for integrity, honesty, justice, the rule of law, good governance and Malaysian patriotism.

It will be sorely missed if the Rocket is not allowed to be used in the 13GE because the Umno/BN government is too afraid of the DAP and on the appeal of MCA, prepared to break all principles of good and democratic governance to knock out the Rocket in GE13.

What is in store for the future with the DAP use of PAS and PKR symbols in the 13GE?

In the first place, my chances of winning Gelang Patah has plummetted further, from 50-50 before the announcement of Ghani Othman's candidacy, to 45-55 with Ghani's candidacy and now 40-60 percent with the ban on the Rocket symbol in the GE.

Can I catch up to go above 50 percent in the contest with Ghani Othman?

The second outcome to the DAP use of the PAS and PKR logo is either a disaster in the making for the DAP nationwide or it will become a game changer in GE13 that will propel Pakatan Rakyat all the way from Gelang Patah to Putrajaya?

Only the counting of votes cast on May 5 will tell which outcome will happen.

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